

REMARKS

Claims 126-201 are in the application.

Claims 126-201 have been subjected to restriction requirement.

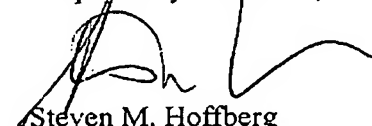
Applicants have elected to prosecute Group I, claims 126-138, and 150-164, with traverse to prosecute together therewith Groups II and III.

According to USPTO policy, Interference issues are treated with priority, and are more important than restriction issues: "The statutory requirement of first inventorship is of transcendent importance..." See, e.g., MPEP 2303.01. This especially true where Groups I and II are copied from the very same patent, and thus were previously categorized by the USPTO as being the same invention. There is no explanation presented for the different treatment in the present application for the very same claims as presented together in US 6,552,300.

Group III also represents copied claims, albeit from a different patent in a similar field, and given similarity of issues, would be administratively efficient to progress together with the remaining claims.

It is therefore respectfully submitted that the restriction requirement should be withdrawn, or at least deferred until potential interference issues are resolved.

Respectfully submitted,


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